



United States Department of Agriculture

StrikeForce For Rural Growth and Opportunity

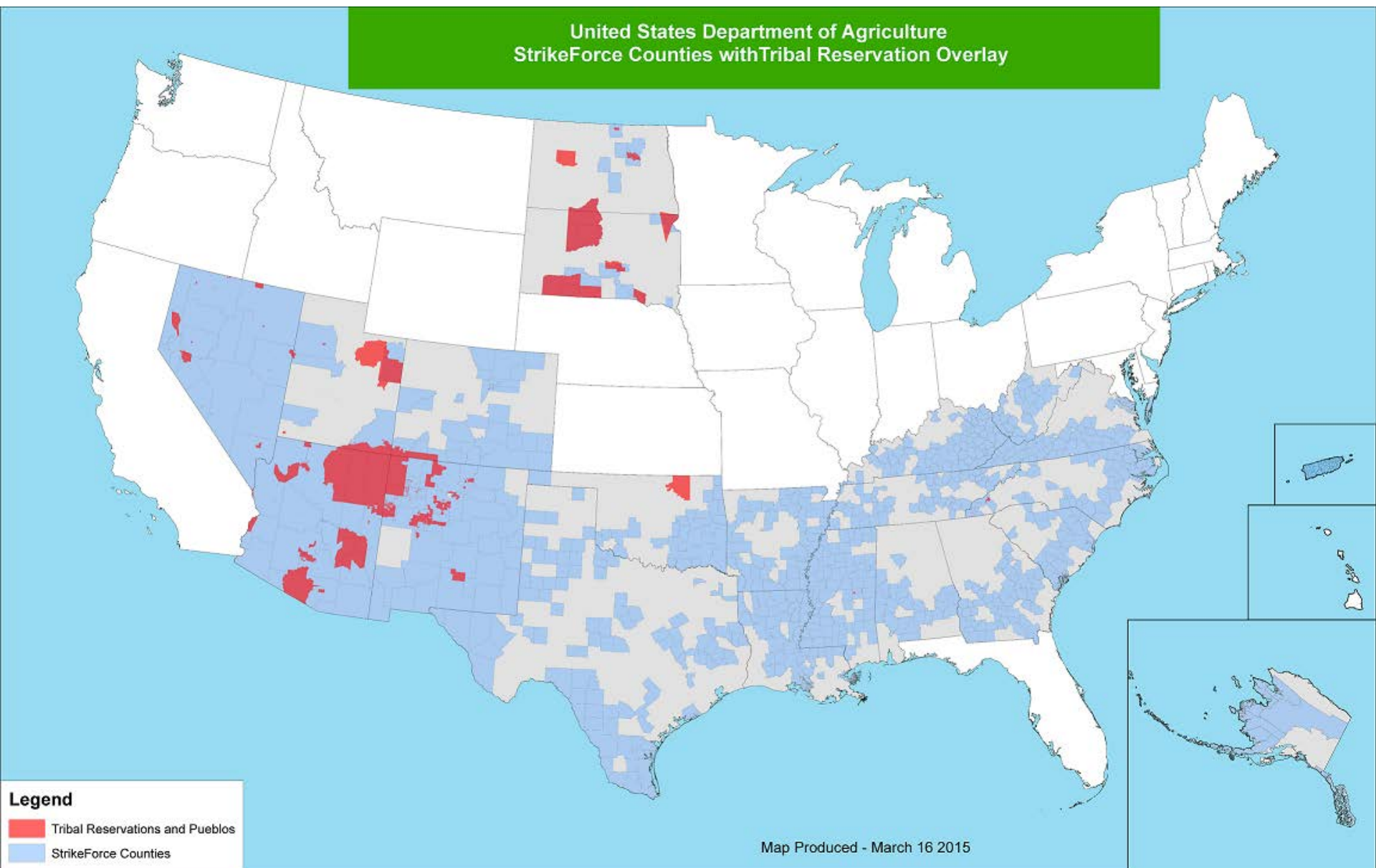
Presented by: Bryan J. Zulko, National StrikeForce Manager

What is StrikeForce?

- In 2010, StrikeForce was created as a pilot project by USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack in 3 States
- Within those States, counties were chosen due to persistent poverty (20% of population below poverty line for the past 30 years)



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StrikeForce Counties with Tribal Reservation Overlay



Goal

- Work across agency lines to leverage scarce program dollars and get them to those who need them most.
- Increase collaborations and partnerships with other federal agencies, public and private entities, local and state governments, and Tribal reservations. In Strikeforce Areas





Meet The Team

Farm Service Agency (FSA)

FSA is equitably serving all farmers, ranchers, and agricultural partners through the delivery of effective, efficient agricultural programs for all Americans.



Meet The Team

Natural Resources and Conservation Service (NRCS)

NRCS helps farmers and other landowners plan and install conservation practices to increase productivity and profitability while improving soil and water quality.

NRCS provides technical assistance and financial incentives for grazing systems, easements, high tunnels, and organic farming.



Meet The Team

Rural Development (RD)

RD is committed to helping improve the economy and quality of life in all of rural America by providing financial programs to support essential public facilities and services, water and sewer systems, housing, health clinics, emergency service facilities and electric and telephone service.

RD promotes economic development by providing loans to businesses through banks and community-managed lending pools, while also assisting communities to participate in community empowerment programs.



Meet The Team

Food and Nutrition Services (FNS)

FNS is committed to ensuring access to healthy and safe food for those participating in our programs including expecting mothers; infants and children in child care and school; low-income families going to food banks; local farmers markets; and local supermarkets. These are investments that support education, health care, and a competitive workforce.

FNS is committed to the sound stewardship of taxpayer dollars through aggressive efforts to reduce and prevent fraud and increase efficiency.



Meet The Team

Other USDA Agencies

To find out more about other USDA Agencies and their available services, please visit the link to Farm Bill information:

<http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=farmbill>

Accomplishments



- Thus far, USDA has partnered with more than 500 community organizations, businesses, foundations, universities, and other groups to support over 128,000 projects and ushered more than \$16.5 billion in investments into rural America.

Accomplishments

FSA

- In Fiscal Year 2014, FSA provided over \$26 million to fund microloans in StrikeForce areas. Approximately 82.3% of the loans were provided to socially disadvantaged and beginning farmers.



Accomplishments

NRCS



- In 2014, the number of landowners applying for NRCS programs in StrikeForce areas increased by 61% over the previous year.
- From 2013 to 2014, NRCS increased funding to StrikeForce target areas by 38%, an increase of nearly \$80 million.

Accomplishments

RD

- In Fiscal Year 2014, the Rural Housing Community Facilities Program obligated a total of—\$84 million to fund hospitals, libraries, and other projects in StrikeForce areas - a 23.5% increase over 2013.



Accomplishments

FNS

- In 2014, FNS served nearly 70 million meals to children in StrikeForce States through school lunch and summer feeding programs.



Primary Goals for 2015

❖ Make 18,200 investments in StrikeForce areas per year that will create or retain businesses/jobs.



Primary Goals for 2015

- ❖ Create 7 new Interagency and public-private partnerships that leverage funds in StrikeForce areas.



Primary Goals for 2015

- ❖ Obtain at least 27,000 applications for USDA programs in StrikeForce areas.



Primary Goals for 2015

- ❖ Increase the number of historically underserved producers that receive USDA funding in StrikeForce areas by 10% over 2014.





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Goals for 2015

❖ Create, save or retain at least 7,875 jobs in StrikeForce areas.



Goals for 2015

- ❖ Increase investments for local and regional food systems within StrikeForce areas.



Goals for 2015



❖ Increase the number of summer meals Served.



Goals for 2015

- ❖ Increase the number of applications for USDA Farm to School Program



Goals for 2015

- ❖ Increase SNAP authorized Farmers Markets and Direct Marketing Farmers over Fiscal Year 2014.





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Do you want to learn more?

Visit:

[www.usda.gov/
StrikeForce](http://www.usda.gov/StrikeForce)

Or Contact Your Local
USDA Service Center



“

We're really trying to help other communities access the programs that I've been able to, to start to create these regional kinds of food systems. So it creates a healthy community, healthy economy, all from the USDA investment.

”

- Don Bustos, Farmer
New Mexico

usda.gov/strikeforce